

REMARKS

Claims 24-33, 35, 37-38, 40-43 and 45-46 are pending in the present application. Claims 24, 35, 38, 40-41 and 45 were amended in this response. Claims 34, 36, 39 and 44 were canceled, without prejudice. No new matter has been introduced as a result of the amendments. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 24, 26-28, 37-41, 45 and 46 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Sayers et al. (US Patent 6,542,754). Claim 25 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sayers et al. (US Patent 6,542,754) in view of Aiello et al. (US Pub 20020018458). Claims 29, 30-33, 42 and 43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sayers (US Patent 6,542,754). Claims 29, 35, 36 and 44 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sayres (US Patent 6,542,754) in view of Cox (US Patent 5,844,891).

Claims 36 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent for, including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

In this response, Applicant has amended claim 24 to incorporate the allowable matter identified in claims 34 and 36. Likewise, claim 38 was amended to incorporate the subject matter of claims 39 and 44, and additionally contain the allowable matter identified in claim 36.

In light of the present amendments, Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If any additional fees are due in connection with this application as a whole, the Examiner is authorized to deduct such fees from deposit account no. 02-1818. If such a deduction is made, please indicate the attorney docket no. (0112740-531) on the account statement.

Respectfully submitted,

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